entire campaign are shown in the accompanying table.) Since the Axis forces were fighting a delaying action from long range, however, there were no major battles along the way.

On the other hand, there were brief periods of success, excitement, exhilaration, surprise, and terror. In the latter category, our soldiers never forgot the accuracy of German 75mm and 88mm guns and the awesome sound of Nebelwerfer (rocket) barrages. The threat of German mines, both antipersonnel and antitank, was also a lingering concern for us.

Happily, Allied air forces dominated the skies over our area of operations. In sharp contrast to our Tunisian campaign experience, we were not bombed or strafed by German Stukas or ME-109s.

As we began our long trek northward from Niscemi on 14 July, we received a pleasant and morale-boosting surprise. Brigadier General "Teddy" Roosevelt, our assistant division commander, joined the head of the company's column during

Gela to Niscemi	11 miles
Niscemi to Mazzarino	27 miles
Mazzarino to Barrafranca	8 miles
Barrafranca to Pietraperzia	19 miles
Pietraperzia to Enna	18 miles
Enna to Petralia	22 miles
Petralia to Gangi	10 miles
Gangi to Sperlinga	10 miles
Sperlinga to Nicosia	4 miles
Nicosia to Cerami	20 miles
Cerami to Troina	7 miles
Troina to Randazzo	23 miles
Total	179 miles

one of our periodic breaks and walked with us on that dusty, winding road for at least two or three miles. He was an instant favorite, exchanging stories with the men of each platoon. Fortunately, this was just the first of such visits. He joined us during several of our other approach marches, on one occasion experiencing some rather heavy incoming German artillery fire. General Roosevelt remained standing even as we hit the dirt; he was a very brave man, an inspiration for all of these young Americans.

On 15 July our company's forward assembly area on a high ridge just north of Mazzarino proved to be a perfect place from which to watch the U.S. 70th Light Tank Battalion take on a German company in the valley below. Approximately 50 of our Stuart light tanks (armed with 37mm guns) played "hide and seek" with about a dozen German Mark IV medium tanks (armed with high-velocity 75mm guns). Each side scored its share of good hits firing from hull defilade positions, but the outgunned U.S. battalion appeared to lose five of its tanks for every one German tank it knocked out. After an hour of fighting, the German tanks withdrew in the direction of Barrafranca, leaving the U.S. 70th Battalion to lick its wounds and prepare to head northward again.

The next day, 16 July, the 3d Battalion, 16th Infantry, received orders to be prepared to move north to protect the left flank of the 26th Infantry as the latter, with its 2d and 3d Battalions forward, deployed on barren slopes to assault Barrafranca. From our position high on a ridgeline, we saw the two battalions hit by a series of heavy rocket barrages. The 150mm and 210mm rockets were awesome in sound and terrifying in apparent results. I was certain the broad area covered by a huge dust cloud would be covered with dead Americans. As it turned out, however, the barrages had produced far fewer casualties than expected. Effective counterbattery fire from our own long-range artillery later managed to destroy *Nebelwerfer* firing positions behind the town.

By then we had moved into position to protect the 26th Infantry's exposed flank. Later, we rejoined our own regiment and led it through Barrafranca enroute to Pietraperzia.

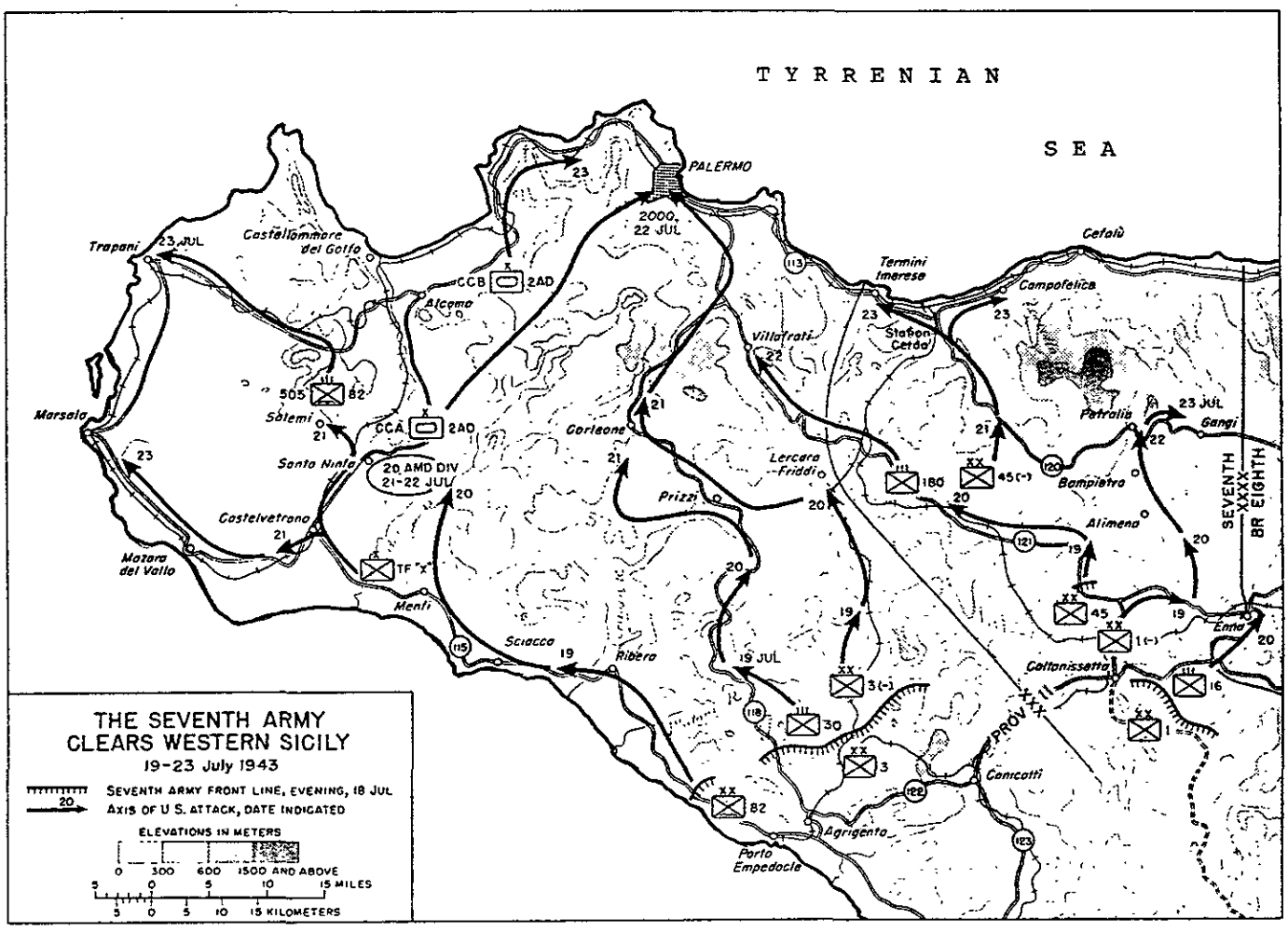
On 18 July I deployed Company L on high ground overlooking the highway from Caltanisseta to Enna. We established roadblocks and ambushes below our position along that important road. Luck was with us during the next 24 hours, and we captured a number of German vehicles, including a messenger's motorcycle.

(The sergeant responsible for these successes had our Company L mechanic check out the motorcycle and then presented it to me, saying it would help me on reconnaissances and in controlling our march columns. I practiced driving on 19 July, with good results. Next day, when our advance into Enna slowed to a crawl, I mounted my new toy and drove past elements of the 70th Tank Battalion to reach its commander and ask what was happening. While navigating an especially sharp curve on the steep, winding dirt road, I turned too quickly and overturned, just a few yards ahead of a moving tank. Fortunately, the driver of the tank, a better driver than I was, managed to stop just before I became a statistic. From that moment to this, I have never again been on a motorcycle.)

As the 70th Tank Battalion continued its attack past the outskirts of Enna, we in the 3d Battalion, 16th Infantry, had the honor of entering and securing the town. I can still see the happy Sicilians standing along every street waving homemade U.S. flags and shouting, "Viva, Babe Ruth." We later concluded that "the Babe" was Sicily's favorite U.S. celebrity. Again it was clearly evident that, to these people, we were the good guys.

Several days later, following the 18th and 26th Infantry Regiments, the 16th was again headed north to an assembly area between Petralia and Gangi (Map 2). From there, we expected to attack eastward to seize Nicosia and Troina. Most German resistance was increasing, and the difficult terrain favored the enemy's defense and faciliated his retrograde movement. Except during the hours of darkness, every U.S. unit was under continuous German observation, often from several different mountain peaks. Incoming artillery fire was increasingly effective. The toughest phase of the campaign was just ahead.

In the meantime, Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr., had shifted Seventh Army's main axis of advance to the west because of disputes he had had with British General Bernard Montgomery—disputes that British General Harold Alexander, the overall ground commander, had settled in Montgomery's



Map 2

favor. Using General Lucian Truscott's 3d Infantry Division's reconnaissance in force from Licata to Agrigento as a springboard, and not informing Alexander of his exact plan until 3d Infantry Division units were on the way, Patton sent the Seventh Army driving for Palermo. In a dash across western Sicily against only light Italian resistance between 19 and 23 July, Seventh Army troops seized Palermo on 22 July while other Army forces reached the north coast on the following day. At this point, Patton again changed directions.

II Corps pivoted 90 degrees to the east and spearheaded the Seventh Army drive to Messina. The 45th Division used the north coast road (Highway 113) while the 1st Division attacked eastward astride a parallel inland road (Highway 120) about 15 miles to the south (Map 2).

Leading our division's advance, the 26th Infantry Regimental Combat Team (RCT) secured high ground east of Gangi by late evening, 24 July. Then, with battalions deployed north and south of Highway 120, the 26th attacked continuously against determined German resistance, finally securing key hills five miles east of Gangi by dark on 26 July.

Meanwhile, the 18th Infantry RCT closed into an assembly area near Gangi on 25 July, and our 3d Battalion led the 16th Infantry RCT into an assembly area southwest of the town early on 26 July. Enemy artillery interdicted the area day and night. (The soldiers hated the sound of incoming German shells, especially those from the 88mm guns. On this morning, following the burst of a large round, one of my soldiers ran into its crater, dropped his pants, and relieved himself. His buddies cheered this sterling achievement under fire.)

At 0300, 27 July, 3d Battalion conducted a night attack to eliminate a German strong point that was holding up our advance and that of a battalion from the 18th Infantry to the north. Company I, on our left, attacked a troublesome German ravine position while we in Company L attacked a small hill position just to the south.

Despite the darkness and rough terrain, we were able to accomplish our mission in good time. Fortunately, there had been no minefields to slow our advance, and the German defenders had withdrawn earlier that evening. Company I, however, had a fierce fight among the ravine defenses. Our battalion commander, Major Charles Horner, later recalled that action as follows:

Surprise was essential. The attack was to be initiated by bazooka fire, with the bayonet as the primary weapon in the assault phase. All rifles were placed on "safe." The quick charge by Company I, led by Captain Kim Richmond, caught the Germans by surprise. The result: numerous German dead from the cold steel of American bayonets. Further, it resulted in numerous prisoners being taken. Company I suffered few casualties.

Twenty-four hours later, after some much-needed sleep, the battalion continued its attack to the east.

By far the best day of the campaign for 3d Battalion, 16th Infantry, was 28 July. Company L's mission was to lead out at dawn and seize Sperlinga (Map 3) about a mile down the road. Then, on order, Company I was to continue the attack eastward to take Nicosia. Except for some brief friendly fire from our own division artillery, my company had no trouble securing its objective by about 0800. The enemy defenders had withdrawn from the town during the night.

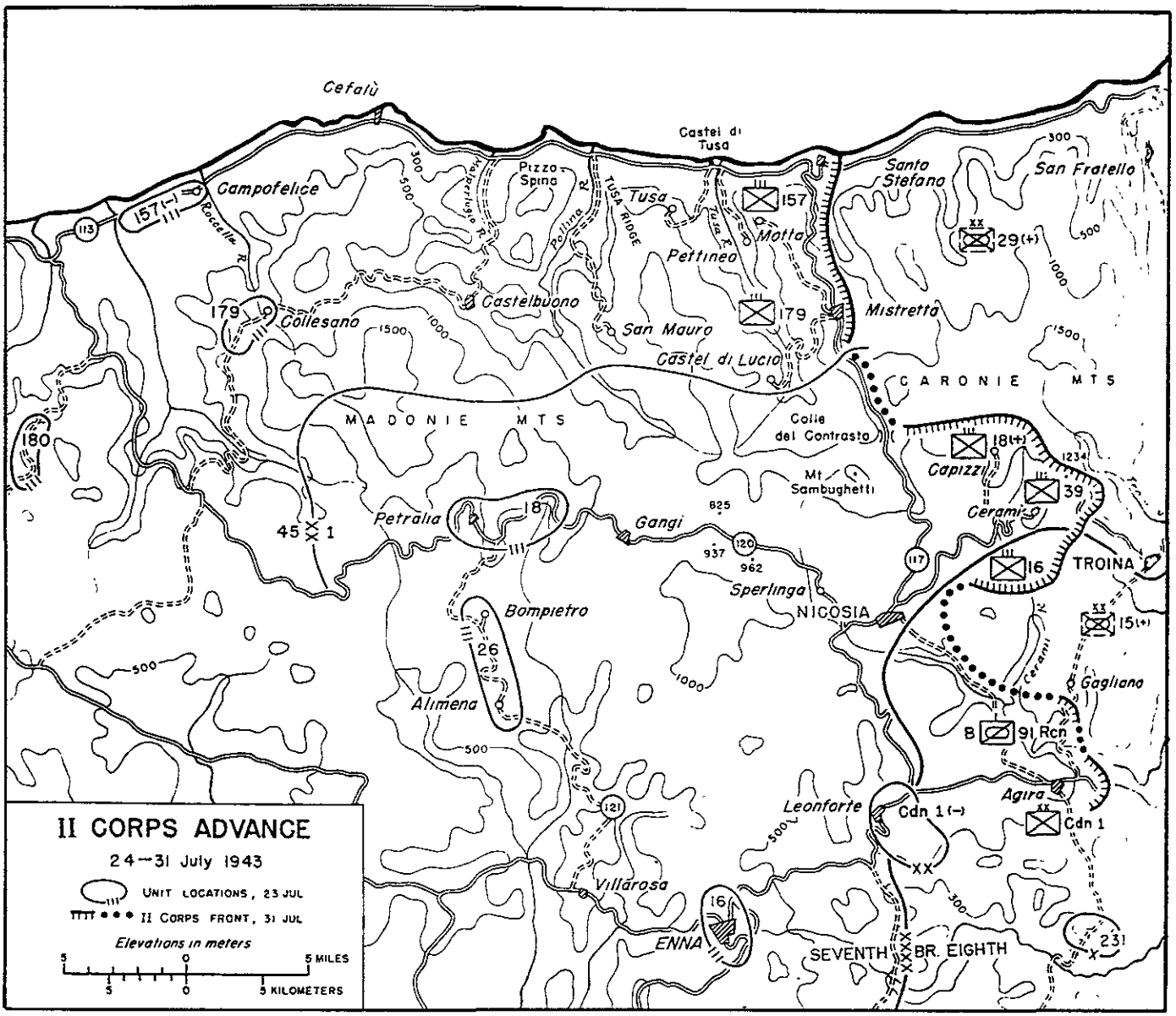
Along with members of my lead platoon, I was greeted on the outskirts of town by an Italian named Joe who spoke American English. He had been deported from Baltimore to Rome in the 1930s for bootlegging, and Mussolini had sent him and other undesirables to Sicily in 1941. Unwelcome and badly treated by the Sicilians, Joe was now the happiest man on the island—his friends, the Americans, were in charge and he was their chief interpreter.

Minutes later, Major Horner and his small battalion command group joined us in the center of town, along the highway to Nicosia. His orders to me were loud and clear: "Company L has been designated II Corps reserve. You will remain in Sperlinga for the next 24 to 48 hours."

Clearly, he was eager to continue the attack toward Nicosia, but he could not contact Captain Richmond and became more and more angry and impatient with each passing minute. Here, recorded in a 1988 letter, are Horner's recollections of what happened that memorable day:

My instructions were that each company on reaching Sperlinga would receive further orders. While waiting for Company I, I was unfortunately out of radio communication. Suddenly, machinegun fire could be heard from the direction of Nicosia some three miles away. The fire was that of the very rapid rate of German machineguns and also the slow rate of U.S. Browning light machineguns. Who was in Nicosia?

A short time later, General Teddy Roosevelt rode up and



Map 3

subclimate areas, there is a danger of heat exhaustion and dehydration. Temperatures are in the 90s with high relative humidity (above 60 percent), which puts wet bulb temperatures in the critical range of 70 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Each soldier may have to drink up to two gallons of water per day to avoid heat injury. The intensity of the heat causes sunburn, and the sun's glare can cause eye injury. The heat and humidity of these subclimates reduce the soldiers' ability to work, especially in the afternoon. It is best to plan operations for early morning or night.

Heat and humidity are less of a problem in the marine west coast areas. Extreme conditions can exist in these areas but only for short periods (a few days at most). Closer to the poles in these areas, the comfortable 70-degree temperatures drop in winter below the critical 50-degree level at which the danger of cold weather injuries begins. The cold of the marine west coast areas is made worse by the dampness, which makes soldiers more susceptible to colds and influenza. Frostbite is a lesser concern because temperatures are rarely below zero, but the continued exposure to cold and wetness together can be a problem. The cold wet winter is longer in the marine west coast areas than in the mediterranean and humid subtropical areas, but these areas can also expect short periods (two weeks or so) of below-freezing temperatures.

The chief problem in the temperate regions is the rapid change in conditions. Temperatures can range 50 degrees in one day, causing drastic changes that soldiers cannot physically adjust to, and that leaders cannot anticipate and prepare for with equipment and extra clothing.

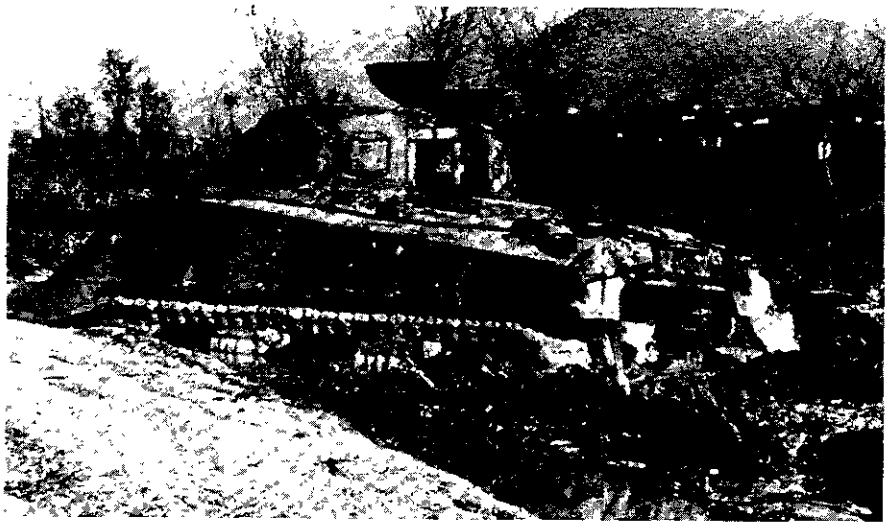
Frequent rain and dampness in the marine west coast subclimate areas, and to a lesser extent in humid subtropical areas, affect the soldiers' physical and psychological well-being. Rain from severe thunderstorms or frontal systems creates hazards to soldiers. Flash flooding fills gullies and swells rivers, making crossing dangerous. Roads become slippery. Air operations become risky. Dampness leads to sickness. With frontal systems, the dampness can continue for weeks, leading to psychological depression in soldiers. This can occur in fall or winter.

Mud may be the biggest problem in all areas of temperate regions. It affects soldiers psychologically as they become irritable from being constantly wet and dirty. Frustration follows, because even the simplest tasks are more complex in mud.

Vehicles get mired, requiring inherently dangerous recovery operations. In the trenches of World War I in France and Belgium, soldiers actually drowned in the mud. According to the account of one unit commander, between 25 October 1914 and 10 March 1915 there were only 18 dry days. To prevent sinking, soldiers had to remain flat in the mud to distribute their weight evenly, and 16 soldiers drowned in it. In the battles around Ypres, the changing weather and mud made conditions intolerable, affecting morale and causing casualties. In the last battles around this obliterated village in the winter of 1918, alternating fronts caused periods of extreme cold and sudden thaw, varied by heavy snowfalls, hailstorms, and rain.

On 15 January a warm spell was ushered in by gale force winds and torrential rain. Plank roads and duckboards were washed away. Men sank deep into icy, clinging mud and had to be dug out. Trenches collapsed from the rain, and shell holes flooded. Digging-in was impossible. Stepping off the duckboards meant sinking knee-deep in the mud. Many who slipped into the mud at night suffered from exposure and, after many hours, died of cold or exhaustion. These conditions, combined with such factors as the smell of corpses and asphyxiating gas delivered by artillery shells, to say nothing of the tactics (frontal attacks into machinegun fire), induced extreme fear and psychological instability.

In frequent thunderstorms, antennas and vehicles in the open are susceptible to lightning. Associated with these storms is high wind, which can uproot or snap trees, endangering soldiers in the field. Even in normally mild-weather areas such as Germany, units have been hit by brief but violent windstorms that blew trees down onto vehicles and tents, destroying equipment and sending soldiers to the hospital. Weather warnings should be provided and immediate precautions taken, especially in training situations where safety is top priority. The humid subtropical areas are also susceptible to violent storms such as tornadoes with winds up to 500 miles per hour



U.S. Army tank mired in the mud of an Italian flood plain during the Allied advance up the boot of Italy, World War II.